STORIES OF BIRDLAND

CHASE

VOL. I.

Ga Holden

STORIES

FROM

BIRDLAND

BY

ANNIE CHASE

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TO TEACHERS.

This little book has been prepared with a view to bringing the children into sympathy with "bird life" part of Nature.

The most prominent and noticeable characteristics have been brought forward, hoping that the child may in time, by aid of the illustrations, be able to distinguish the more common birds. Stuffed specimens will, of course, help the study of each lesson, but a walk in the woods, even if only the haunts of the different birds can be discerned, will be far better. Of course this is not often possible, and old nests—be sure and use only the old ones which the birds will never use again — the twigs where they hung, descriptions of the trees, where they were found, etc., etc., will all lend interest.

Any bit of Nature is always refreshing, uplifting and developing, but do not encourage robbing birds' nests for the study of the egg, nor trapping birds for the study of them, lest you teach brutality and selfish curiosity rather than the sweet lesson the wild bird holds in his spirit and song, for all who will listen reverently.

If you are so fortunate as to have a strip of meadow or bit of woodland near your schoolroom, visit it with the children if only during intermission.

Teach them to listen patiently and quietly for the bobolink's or wood sparrow's song; teach them, too, that their little feathered friends have rights which must not be infringed upon. There is nothing worth having that is to be learned by frightening some pretty little singer from his perch and chasing him over the meadow, or by robbing his nest hidden in the grass.

Hoping the following lessons may prove helpful to you and the children we love, I am

Yours sincerely,

THE AUTHOR.

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BLUEBIRD.

STORIES FROM BIRDLAND.

PERCHING BIRDS.

BLUEBIRD.

It is March now.

How much warmer the sun seems.

The pussy willows are out.

O! what is that bit of pretty blue on the fence?

See, it moves! it sings!

It is a bluebird!

O, we are so glad you have come little Bluebird.

Winter has been so long.

How happy you are!

Are you singing to the flowers down under the leaves of last year?

They must be glad to hear your sweet song.

Do you sing to set the fairies at work down in the dark soil?

Sing away, little bird; we all love you; flowers, fairies, and little girls and boys.

BLUEBIRD.

"Thank you," says Mr. Bluebird with a tip of his head.

"Thank you; if you will

fix a nice box, I will bring my mate and we will keep house there.

BLUE BIRD'S NEST.

Put it high up away from cats and naughty boys.

If you do not, we shall build in some hollow tree.

My mate and I come so

early we can take the nicest place for a home.

We shall line our home with fine grass, hair and feathers.

How soft and warm it will be for our four or five pale blue eggs!

When our little ones come, I am very busy, for I feed them and my mate at the same time.

We shall have two or three broods this summer, if nothing happens.

My mate and I love best to live in the Eastern United States.

Ha! I saw a bug then under that dry leaf.

There are some more in that old post.

I must be off.

Good-by."

SONG SPARROW.

You dear, red brown bird on the wall there, how you do sing!

You are the first to sing us a spring song.

Do you hide a tiny harp in your gray and white breasts?

You have been singing for an hour or more.

You do not mind the cold winds.

You built a nest in the grass last spring.

I saw five speckled eggs in it.

I was afraid some one would tread upon them.

I think some of your brothers and sisters stayed in the sheltered meadow-land all winter.

They sang there one day when the sun shone warm and bright.

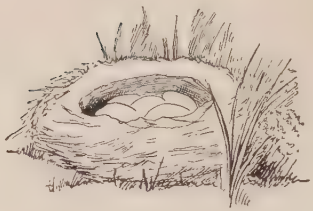
The dried flower stalks trembled with joy, I know.

Were you among them?

Or, did you fly away to spend the winter in the swamps of the sunny south-lands?

Song Sparrow we shall never forget your name nor your song.

SONG SPARROW.



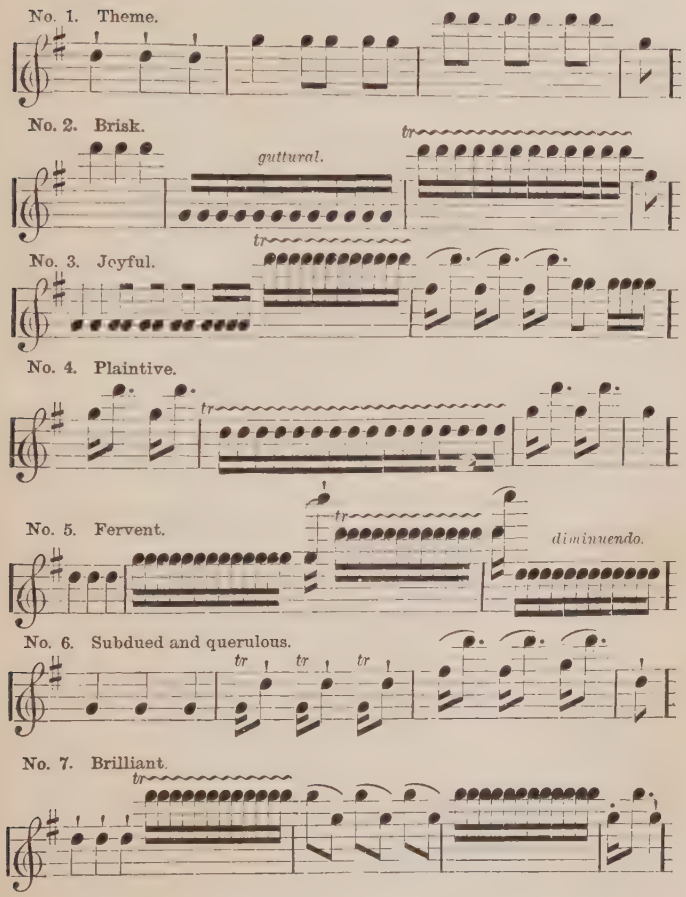
SONG SPARROW'S NEST.

Hark, little Song Sparrow
Sings from the snow,
There where the leaves and flowers
Died long ago.

A secret there is
In his tiny green breast,
He's singing about it;
Is it a nest?

Or have the wee pussies
Peeped out at his call,
And he sings to cheer them,
There by the wall?

SONG OF THE SONG SPARROW



WOOD SPARROW.

Let us go after blue-berries.

What a big pail you have, Kate!

Do you think you can fill it?

How quiet it is here.

The sun lies on the hills.

Under the trees it is thick shade.

There are some wild scarlet lilies.

O, what lots and lots of berries!

"Jingle, tinkle, tinkle, tinkle," they drop into our bright, tin pails.

Hark!

"De-de-de"—with a warble and trill.

That is a Wood Sparrow singing.

What a sweet sound!

There he is.

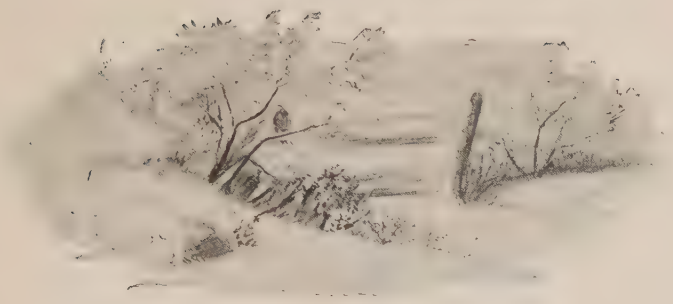
He is a little smaller than a canary.

He has a pale, chestnut colored crown.

He does not come near our home.

He loves best to sing among the junipers and berry bushes on the hillside.

SPARROWS FEEDING THEIR YOUNG.



THE WOOD SPARROW'S HOME

It is hid in the grove by the
pasture bars,
It is scented with pines and
alder spars.
It is snug and safe, and the
wood-nymphs say,
He is singing about it every
day.

With "De-de-de-de," over
and over again,
Now like the wind through
the junipers tall,
Now like the drip of the
rain.

THE HAIR BIRD OR CHIPPING SPARROW.

What little bird is that?

He is picking up crumbs by the doorstep.

See how tame he is!

He wears a little, velvety, brown cap.

How tiny you are little bird!

I heard your voice this morning before sunrise.

You were singing with the other birds.

So softly and shyly did you sing, you thought nobody heard you.

God heard you doing your best.

Some people say you only chirp.

I think you sing very sweetly.

We should all miss you very much, were you to cease your song these May mornings.

How you bob your head about!

Do you think as quickly as you move?

CHIPPING SPARROW.

ROBIN.

ROBIN.

Hark! what a full, round note!

It is not too loud.

It is not too soft.

I heard the same song very early in the morning, before the sun was up.

O, I see the singer now.

He has a red breast.

It is a dear Robin Redbreast.

Look! there he is on the post.

"Tu whit, tu wortle, tu whit!" sings Robin.

"Guess I will build my nest in this tree near the house; I feel safer there;" says Robin.

"Yes; I like to have you put string and soft cotton on the lawn for me, but I shall use only the white.

I do not put blue or red into my house, Miss Nellie.

GOLDEN ROBIN.

I like to have it look, in color, very much like the bark of the tree.

When my nest is all done, we shall put five or six eggs in it.

They will be bright greenish blue.

Mate and I work very hard after the little ones come; they do have such big, yellow mouths.

As fast as we get one filled another is hungry.

We carry them worms all day long.

Hark! I think I hear a worm now.

GOLDEN ROBIN'S NEST.

Yes, there he is in the earth."

Come out here, Mr. Worm. See how Robin does tug at the worm!

See Robin swallow it.

Robin came to us in February.

He will not leave us until November.

Some of his kind stay all the year in some States.

"Tu-wortle, tu-whit!"

How can you sing after such a dinner? Mr. Robin.

ROBIN.

QUESTIONS.

O, Robin Redbreast,
Who painted your coat?
Come, tell me Robin,
Who taught you your note?

How do you know
When it is time for a nest?
How do you know
Just which place is best?

Does Robin make answer
Or care?—Not a bit.
He only sings gaily,
"Tu-wortle, tu-whit."

KINGBIRD

THE KINGBIRD.

What bird is that chasing that wide-winged hawk?

A Kingbird did you say?

But how small he looks away up there!

How angry the hawk is, and frightened, too.

How the Kingbird screams!

He sounds as though he were laughing at the cowardly hawk.

The hawk can not reach the Kingbird, because the sly little fellow keeps high up above her.

See the Kingbird dart down and pluck a feather or two from the hawk, and then dart back, screaming with glee.

You are a rogue, Mr. Kingbird.

Now that you are resting, I can see how you look.

You are not very gaily

dressed, sir, but you are so neatly striped with white, and you are so graceful that I love to look at you.

KINGBIRD.

Your dress is of slate color and white, and you wear a little tuft of yellow feathers for a cap.

You made the yellow

feathers stand right up straight just now.

You brave little fellow, you are not more than eight and a half inches long, but I have heard that not only hawks but eagles are afraid of you.

You don't stir from your mullein-stalk perch to catch flies do you, Mr. Kingbird?

"Not I," says the Kingbird, "I care only for bees and the larger insects.

I have a fine nest in the orchard where the bees come for honey; I eat the lazy bees first, if I can get them.

I despise lazy people, don't you, little girl?

There is a fat old drone now.

He will make a fine meal."

WHIPPOORWILL.

WHIPPOORWILL.

The sun has gone behind the hills.

Nooks and hollows are now quite dark.

Who is that whistling?

"Whip-poor-will! Whip-poor-will!"

It is a little, gray, brown bird.

He is whistling his name over and over again.

"Whip-poor-will! Whip-poor-will!"

He is a mottled bird, with a white collar around his neck.

He has a broad tail.

He has large eyes, and, O, such a big mouth!

His mouth looks small when closed, but opened — dear me!

He is glad it is large so that he can catch insects.

All day he sleeps in the thick, dark woods.

All night he sings his song.

Mr. and Mrs. Whippoorwill never build a nest.

Mrs. Whippoorwill lays her eggs among the fallen leaves.

She lays but two eggs.

There in the dry, dead leaves the little ones grow up.

Are you not afraid that some one will harm them?

But they look so much

like little lumps of mouldy earth that very few people would notice them.

If anyone does come near them, brave Mrs. Whippoorwill does a strange thing.

She cries out and beats the ground with her wings as if she were wounded.

While she is doing this her little ones creep away out of sight.

You see she risks her own life to save her babies.

Whippoorwill is very shy and flies away as soon as the danger to her little ones is over.

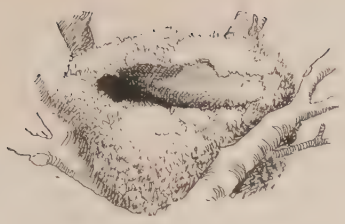
Whippoorwill travels all over the United States, going North as the summer comes on.

How you sing, little bird!

Do you never tire of those sad notes?

WHIPPOORWILL.

WOOD THRUSH.



NEST OF WOOD THRUSH.

WOOD THRUSH OR SONG THRUSH.

Now we are in the deep, dark woods.

How still it is here!

That is a nest on that low bending birch.

See, it is empty.

It is made of grass, leaves and weeds, bent and twined together.

There are some withered beech leaves at the bottom.

That is to keep out the dampness; for, you see, it hangs just over the cool brook.

A thrush's nest, did you say?

How I wish we could hear the thrush sing.

Ah! there he is now.

Hide quickly and quietly behind this large tree, for the thrush does not like to sing before strangers.

He has a white breast with dark spots upon it.

His back is cinnamon color.

His wings and tail are a little darker than his back.

Why, he is plastering the wall of the nest with a bit of mud.

Do sing for us, little bird.

He is drinking.

Now there is a cloud over the sun, and the woods are quite dark.

He holds up his head a bit, tips it sideways to look

up at the dark sky beyond the branches, and—hark!

O, what a song!

Such trills and warbles!

Such sweet pipings like a living flute!

You took lessons of the brook, I know, little thrush, by the way the notes slip, and drop, and tumble from your throat.

By and by Mrs. Thrush will put three or four light blue eggs in the nest.

We hope every egg will become a little bird, for thrushes are not very common.

We will creep away now, and leave the red-brown bird in his home by the climbing vines.

THRUSH FEEDING ITS YOUNG.

THE CAT BIRD.

We are almost out of the woods now.

What is that strange cry from the thicket there by the open field?

It sounds like a cat calling, "Mew, mew, mew!"

It is a Cat Bird.

See, there he stands as

straight as can be, with his wings and tail spread out.

He puts all his strength into every call.

You are a rogue, you little slate-colored bird; I thought Kitty was hurt.

You can sing a pretty song, I know, for I have heard you.

You are a cousin to the thrush.

But what a mocker you are!

Just now you made a sound like a quail.

Papa says that your nest is made among the low bushes.

It is made of bark and twigs.

If a cat, dog, or snake should try to catch your young, you would be very brave and daring.

I know what you were hunting for in the field.

You were after worms.

Does Mr. Farmer know how much you help him in that way?

THE MOCKING BIRD.

It is early morning in the grove.

All the birds are singing.

There is a song which sounds above all the others.

It is the song of the Mocking Bird.

Hark!

Now he sings like a thrush.

Now like a robin.

Now he sings his own round, full note.

See, he flies as he sings.

He mounts high as he sings loudly.

He drops lower and lower as his song dies away.

Hurrah for you, little mocker!

You cried out like a quail yesterday, and cheated the sportsmen.

Hark! now he screams like a swallow.

Now he calls, "Whip-poor-will."

He has been singing since the moon came up last evening.

He is not dressed as gaily as we expected to find him.

He is dressed from head to foot in brown, black and white.

His nest is in that thorn bush by the edge of the wood.

It is made of twigs and

sticks, and is lined with fine roots. The eggs are blue, blotched with brown.

When the lady mocking bird is sitting upon the eggs, no one can go near the nest.

Mr. Mocking Bird will dart out and peck at dogs, cats or men; and if a snake draws near, he will sit upon it and kill it with his bill.

Mocking Birds like only the warmer parts of our country.

THE HOUSE WREN.

(FOUND THROUGHOUT THE U. S.)

There is an old two-wheeled gig out in the field.

What do you think I found in it?

A bird's nest.

The top is off the box of the gig.

The birds have built a queer cup-shaped, soft nest in it.

All around the soft nest they have placed sticks and leaves to keep it in place.

Tom says the birds are House Wrens.

In the nest are seven eggs, almost as broad as they are long.

What a lucky old gig to hide such treasures!

There is father Wren now on the shaft of the gig.

A tiny fellow with a tail standing very straight like all wrens.

He is reddish-brown and white, with bars of dark across his wings and tail.

He sings a loud, clear, shrill song.

He will sing all through the days of May and June.

He is a brave little bird, and not at all afraid that we shall trouble his queer nest.

We will not tell any cruel or rude person where he lives.

CHICADEE.

(EASTERN CHICADEE OR COMMON BLACK-CAPPED TITMOUSE.)

"Chic-a-dee-dee-dee."

"Chick a dee, dee, dee, dee, dee."

See, there goes the singer.

He flew out of that shady spot by the edge of the wood.

Come near to him, but do not frighten him.

He has a black cap and throat.

How white his feathers are on either side of his little head!

He stayed with us all winter. I know, for I heard him singing one morning, near our house, when the weather was very cold.

So you are hunting bugs, Mr. Chicadee? I thought so.

I think I know why you always bring up your children in June weather, Mr. Chicadee; it is because —

No, I won't tell anyone about it.

I saw your eggs the other day.

There were seven of them.

They were pure white, spotted with reddish brown.

They were in that old stump by the pasture bars.

I did not touch them.

You were so frightened I will not look in again.

I have no right to peep in the window of your house, have I, Mr. Chicadee?

"No, no," says Chicadee, "No, no."

"Once my mate and I had built a nice, snug nest in a stump by the wayside.

We were so happy!

One morning some boys pulled off the top of our house.

My mate sat quite still, for she had six little ones under her breast.

I flew out. but could do no good.

The boys shouted.

My brave, little mate sat very still, but I could see her tremble.

The boys took her in their hands.

She only tried to get back to take care of our darlings.

She did not make a sound.

'O, for shame!' said one boy.

'Put the poor mother back,' said another.

So my little mate was put back upon her nest.

She was so weak with fear that she could scarcely breathe; but she sat closely down upon her little birds.

By and by the boys went away.

Our nice home was spoiled, but we were so pleased to have our little ones again!

As soon as they could fly, we got them into the woods.

We shall not build in that spot again.

We like to live in almost any part of the United States."

RED START.

RED START AND SPECKLED CREEPER.

Come into the woods again, the deep woods, where the pine trees make soft music.

There are two little birds who love to live here.

Their fine little voices are

scarcely louder than the grasshopper's music.

They are the Red Start and Speckled Creeper.

The Red Start is one of the fly-catchers, and does not often venture out of his forest home.

His neck, back and middle breast are black.

The sides of his breast are orange.

The lower part of his body is white.

On his wings is an orange colored band; they are lined with orange.

The little Speckled Creeper is so called because he likes to climb trees like a woodpecker.

He is fond of grubs and insects.

He looks something like a little speckled sparrow.

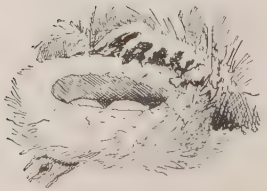
His feathers are many of them edged with white.

He has white strips on his crown.

His wings are black edged with white.

He often ventures up into our gardens for grubs and worms.

Come often little creeper; we will not harm you.



NEST OF RED START.

OVEN BIRD.

How light and graceful that little bird looks!

He came out from that tuft of grass.

His nest is there on the ground.

We should not have seen it had he not run out of it.

It is roofed over like an oven with a door on one side.

OVEN BIRD

It is the shape of his nest which gives the bird his name: the Oven Bird.

He wears a brownish yellow crown.

His breast is white with black spots.

Hark! he sings: "I see, I see, I see."

He sings it louder every time.

How you make the woods ring little bird, though you cannot sing a wonderful song!

They tell us you often sing in the night.

OVEN BIRD.

SCARLET TANAGER.

Down in low grounds or among oaken woods lives the Scarlet Tanager.

You can tell him by his bright red feathers.

They look so pretty in th dark green woods.

His wings and tail are black.

But he does not build a fine house.

SCARLET TANAGER.

He chooses some bough of the oak or pine, and builds a shallow basket of coarse grass and sticks.

In this the baby tanagers are brought up.

His song sounds somewhat like the robin's.

He loves best to sing in the cool woods, with only the brook and ferns and leaves to hear him.

SCARLET TANAGER.

SWALLOWS.

BARN SWALLOWS.

See those birds.

One, two, three, four, a dozen, two dozen.

They are flying out of the top of the barn.

See how they fly round and round.

They hold their little mouths open, and so catch flies and insects as they fly.

What a funny way to eat one's supper!

They go into the barn now and then.

There they are — all in now but one.

Now there are two, three, four of them.

Come into the barn.

What a queer squeaking noise they make away up there among the rafters.

There are the nests.

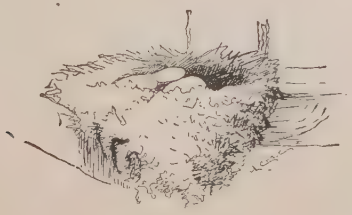
One, two, three, more than we can stop to count.

They are made of mud and lined with soft feathers.

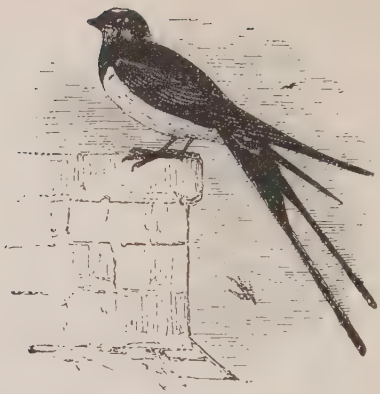
There will be from four to six young ones in each nest.

The eggs are nearly white, with reddish spots on them.

In September these swallows will gather together—all of their kind in a great flock—to fly away to warmer lands.



BARN SWALLOW'S NEST.



THE CHIMNEY SWALLOWS.

What is that noise in the chimney?

Such a whirring sound!

It seems to come from the unused part of the chimney.

It is the Chimney Swallows.

They are feeding their young.

Last year, after the swallows were gone, we took an old nest out of the chimney.

It was made of sticks and fastened together with a queer, gluey paste which the parent birds made.

The swallows stay in the chimney all day.

All night, and just at dawn, you may see them flying about like the barn swal-

lows, high up in the air after insects.

Away up in the blue sky they get their meals.

Sometimes you may see them skimming about just above the water of a lake or river.

There are some now just above that pool.

See they almost dip their wings in it as they skim about.

What a strange way to eat one's supper.

MEADOW LARK.

Hush! tread more softly.

Brush aside the tall rushes carefully.

Look! there is a Meadow Lark close beside that sprig of yellow gerardia.

He has a yellowish breast.

There is a dash of black at his throat.

His head is beautifully striped, and his back and wings are mottled.

Ha, we frightened him!

See! he flutters a moment, then rises in the air.

He flaps his wings a few times and then sails away.

I wish we had heard him sing.

He is coming back.

See how he keeps his eye on that thick clump of rushes.

I believe his mate and nest are there.

We will not hurt your home, little lark.

Yes, there is the nest on the ground.

The lady lark is in the nest.

MEADOW LARK.

She looks very much like her mate.

O, she is frightened, too; away she goes.

There are the eggs—five.

Five of them white, spotted with yellow.

There, we will go away at once.

They are back to their home, but they do not know we are hiding near by.

See, the lady lark goes into the nest.

Her mate walks back and forth in front of the nest like a sentinel.

See how he struts along.

Now and then he flirts

his tail feathers as a lady does a fan.

When the lady lark is tired, her mate will sit on the eggs for her and let her fly about the meadow.

By the last of June the young ones will be out.

What a nice time they will have in the sunny meadow while papa and mamma find them insects to eat!

Long before the cold

winds blow over the meadow, the larks will be flying to warmer lands.

They will go in flocks and fly far up above the trees.

When they are hungry they will alight, at a signal from some little captain of the army, upon the ground.

While they are eating, the leader will look up now and then to see if all is well.

Should there be danger, he will give a loud call.

At this call all the flock will rise up and away again to find a safe spot.

In the early, dewy morning, or toward evening, the Meadow Lark sings his song.

Can we tell how a lark sings?

No, it would be as easy to tell how the rose smells.

LARK.

WHY?

Why do you sing, little lark,
There in the grasses and reeds?
Why do you warble so silvery soft,
Why sing such a song to the weeds?

Why, says the gay little
birdie,
I sing lest my heart lose its
trust,
I sing lest my mate could
not find me,
I sing, little girl, for I must.

THE SUMMER YELLOW BIRD.

Sue came up this morning with her eyes full of tears.

"Aunt Nell's canary must have got out of his cage," she sobbed.

"Come quick, and help me catch him."

But the yellow bird on the pear tree was not a canary.

It was a Summer Yellow Bird.

He was quite tame.

He had begun to build a nest in one of the lower branches of the pear tree.

NEST OF SUMMER YELLOW BIRD.

His little mate sat in the middle of it, and fixed the bits of stems and leaves and the down from the willow catkins as fast as he brought them to her.

They made almost the whole of the nest in one day.

They raised one brood of little ones from their six, green, speckled eggs.

SUMMER YELLOW BIRD.

THE AMERICAN GOLDFINCH.

There is a bright yellow bird with a black head, and black and white wings.

It is a Goldfinch.

He is on that thistle by the bars.

He waits until the middle of July before he builds his nest.

You see the wise, little fellow waits until there are

GOLDFINCH

plenty of seeds to feed his little ones upon.

He sings now a low, soft song, then a ringing song, like a canary.

NEST OF GOLDFINCH.

And his nest,—

It is the softest, nicest little basket you ever saw.

The wool from velvety leaves and plants, the finest

grasses, and even the down from dandelion seeds are nicely placed in the nest for a lining.

In warm, summer weather, he loves to bathe often.

He loves the brook in the meadow for a bathing place.

GOLDFINCH.

THE ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK.

What a pretty song that is!

It seems to come from the edge of that wood.

Let us follow the sound and find the singer.

Now the notes ring loud and clear.

Now they are soft and sad.

We must find the singer of—

ROSE–BREASTED GROSBEAK.

Ah, there he is now on the center of that small tree.

He is sitting in a nest and singing.

It is a Rose-Breasted Grosbeak.

Mamma Grosbeak went away awhile and left Papa Grosbeak to care for the nest.

Papa was so full of song he had to sing while he kept house.

Why, you careless bird, some one who would harm your nest might hear you.

He does not see us.

Here comes Mamma Grosbeak, and Papa hops out of the nest with a chirp of relief.

ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK.

What a pretty bird!

His head and parts of his wings and tail are black.

The lower part of his breast is white.

Just below his throat he

wears a dash of bright rose color.

There is rose color under his wings, too.

I saw it when he plumed his feathers.

If we could look into the nest we should find it a very coarse nest.

It is built of coarse grass, stems and bits of leaves.

It is a large nest.

It is eight inches across it.

It is three and a half inches high.

Sometimes the bird sings in the night.

Sing away little bird; they tell us you care to sing for only eight weeks of the whole year.

Is that true, sir, or do you sing other songs?

We are so glad we found you, you are so rare.

We will leave you now without harm to you, but it is not safe, sir, to tell people so plainly where your treasures are.

RUBY THROATED HUMMING-BIRD.

"Hum! hum! hum! hum!"

There he is near that morning-glory.

Now he darts off to a rose.

What a noise he makes for a little fellow only three and a half inches long!

His wings fly so we can not see the color of his feathers.

O! now he has alighted.

His back, and neck, and sides under his wings, are bright green.

His tail and wings are deep brownish purple.

What a long bill he has!

And such tiny feet and legs!

The lower part of his throat looks as though he wore a necklace of rubies.

It is a patch of feathers.

Now they look dark red.

Now they flash out in the sunshine as deep golden yellow.

You are so small little bird, how can you care for a home and children?

It must be a tiny home.

HUMMING BIRD'S NEST.

THE HUMMING-BIRD'S JEWEL.

Where did you buy that
gem at your throat,
Sweet little hummer with
never a note?
Did some flower pluck it
for you from her crown?
Or did some sunbeam drop
it down?
Or is it a dewdrop the
fairies sold
To you for a bit of the
lily's gold?

THE INDIGO BIRD.

Is that little bird blue or green?

A moment ago he seemed to be a bit of the sky come down to visit us.

Now he looks as though he were bright green.

It is the Indigo Bird, a dashing, gay little singer.

He sang in the top of that

high tree yesterday for a whole hour.

The sun shone hot, but he took no heed, but sang away with all his might.

Like the bobolink, he seems to enjoy singing at noon-time.

His nest is in that low bush among the grasses and clover blossoms.

Outside it is of flax.

Inside it is lined with fine, dry grass.

His five eggs are blue with a blotch of purple.

He came to us in May.

Next August he will start for Mexico or Guatemala to spend the winter.

He eats seeds and insects.

Papa says he once found an Indigo Bird's nest in a cluster of sumach trees.

And what do you think he said?

That the nice little couple came back the next year,

and the next, and the next, and laid their eggs in the same nest.

How did they know how to find the spot?

INDIGO BIRD.

A MORNING SONG.

There's a concert of birdies
Out in the grove.
Dame Morning began it
With notes from above.

Larks, Wrens, Robins, Blue-
birds,
Sang a quartet.
Thrush sang such a solo
The flowers' eyes were wet.

The blackbirds came in
With a chattering glee;
One warbled a ditty;
The rest sang "Chu-ree!"

The trees clapped their hands,
And the brook bubbled over;
Then all sang together,—
Birds, brook, trees and clover.

THE BELTED KINGFISHER.

Look at that tree which hangs over the river.

There sits a Kingfisher. He is thirteen inches long.

What a long, broad bill he has.

His tail is short, and his head looks very large.

His feathers are dusky blue.

He has a blue band on his

KINGFISHER.

breast, and a white collar around his neck.

See how still he sits, with the blue sky above him, and the blue water beneath.

He has bent his great head low down.

He is looking for a fish.

Hurrah! he has caught one.

Why! he has swallowed him whole!

Oh! I should think you needed a big throat and bill, Mr. Kingfisher.

Did you hear that queer noise he made when he darted at the fish?

It sounded like a watchman's rattle.

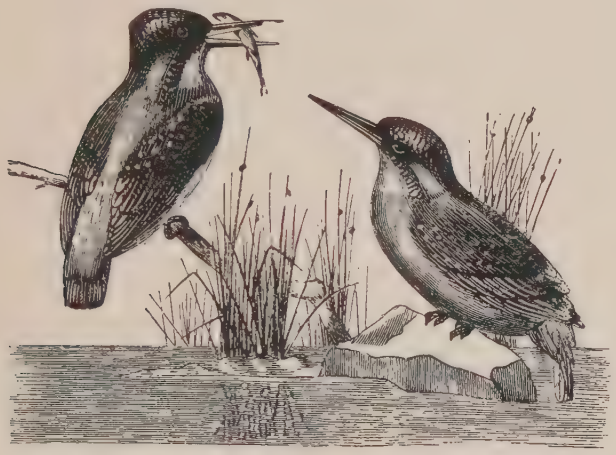
His nest is in a hole he has made in the sandy bank. He sees us.

There! he sounded his rattle again.

Away he goes, but he keeps close to the stream.

People in olden times believed the Kingfisher built

his nest upon the waves, and floated it as though it were a boat.

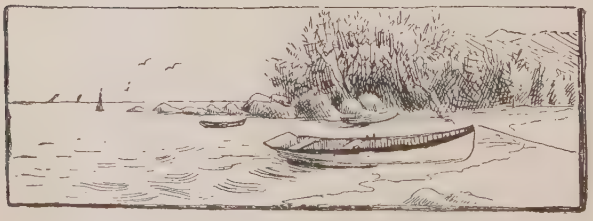


KINGFISHERS.

They believed Mr. Kingfisher had power to keep away storms and high winds until his young were out of the nest.

Some people say that Mr. Kingfisher makes a fine weather-vane.

They say its long, pointed bill will always turn toward the North.



THE COW BIRD.

But here is such a strange bird.

She never makes a nest of her own.

She has not the patience to sit upon her own eggs.

When ever Mrs. Thrush, Sparrow, Cat Bird, or almost

any other bird goes out for a short stroll, Mrs. Cow Bird steps into the empty house and lays her egg.

Mrs. Cat Bird knows it is not her own, and tosses out the egg as soon as she comes home.

But poor little Mrs. Thrush and dozens of others don't know the difference.

Mrs. Thrush hatches out her own darlings and another larger bird.

This last bird she cannot love.

"What is the reason?" she thinks.

O, he is so greedy!

Then he almost killed the smallest of the nestlings yesterday.

Every day the bird grows worse.

Ten chances to one he will kill all the rest.

What can Mrs. Thrush do?

If she only understood how things were.

Don't you see he looks differently, Mrs. Thrush?

Mrs. Cow Bird is dressed modestly in drab and black.

She does not look like such an impolite bird.

Perhaps she knows no better.

Mrs. Summer Yellow Bird knows better than to hatch such eggs.

If she comes home to find

cow birds' eggs in her nest, she is very angry.

What do you think she does?

They are too large for her to toss or roll out.

She sets to work and builds a new nest right on the top of the old nest, and leaves the cow bird's eggs in the nest underneath.

No warmth reaches the cow bird's eggs from Mrs. Yellow Bird's wise little

breast; so they are soon spoiled.

Perhaps we ought not to call the rude bird Mrs. Cow Bird; for cow birds never go in pairs, and never know their own children when they meet them the next season.

They travel all over the United States.

The Cow Bird never sings.

Why should he?

He has no loved one to sing to or about.

He has no little ones to be rocked to sleep.

You queer bird, do you spend your time in studying bird politics, or do you enjoy being free from care and study, better than all things else?

SNOW BIRDS.

Deep snow covers the ground.

The air is biting cold.

Look! Out there in the field, where the dead, seedy stalks of weeds rise above

the snow, there are ever so many dark, gray birds.

With a twitter and a cry, they all rise up on their wings; then settle down again.

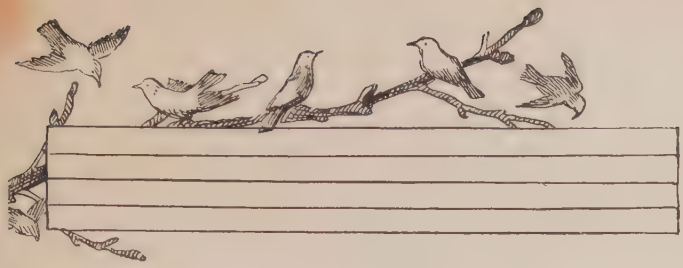
Throw out some canary seeds and crumbs for them.

They are Snow Birds.

When the weather begins to be warm, they will go farther north; for, strange to say, they love the cold.

They build their nests upon the ground.

At night, and when the storm is howling over the wood, they hide themselves in the thick branches of evergreens, or in stacks of hay or brush.



BOBOLINK.

You are not sad are you, Bobolink?

"Bob-o-link-le, tink, tinkle, tink, tinkle! Not I," says Bob, as he lights on a bending twig for a swing.

"Life is merry, merry, merry.

See, this pretty meadow

BOBOLINK.

is my home. There are sweet secrets down among those grasses.

I know how the sun coaxes the violets and buttercups.

I know who painted that strip of water like the sky, but I cannot tell you.

'Tink, tinkle, tink, tinkle.'

"Yes, yes; I sing at high noon, as well as in the morning.

I cannot help it — 'Tink, tinkle!'"

How can so much music come from a little bird only six and a half inches long?

You noisy, saucy, jaunty fellow! You are gaily dressed, and you should be.

He is black, white and yellow.

Down there in the grass is his nest, with five bluish-white, spotted eggs.

His little mate is dressed very modestly in brownish-black and dull yellow.

She is as shy as her mate is fond of show and noise.

I saw him feeding her just now with grasshoppers and crickets, while she sat very quietly on the precious eggs.

He plucked a few grass seeds, too, and ate them himself.

Wise little singer!

He comes to us in the early summer when everything is fresh and glad.

When the clovers take off their bonnets, and the daisies their hats, he takes

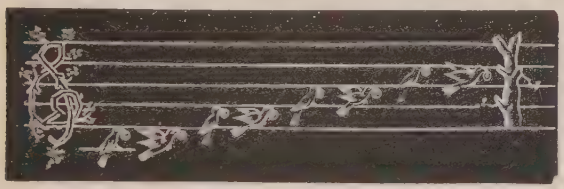
BOBOLINK.

off his spring suit, too, and puts on a russet, gray one.

He soon goes away to the rich swamps, and feasts there until he is so fat you

would think he could never swing on a grass stalk again without breaking it.

Next June there he is again in the meadow, singing away as gaily as ever:—



"Merrily swinging on brier
and weed,
Near to the nest of his little dame,
Robert of Lincoln is telling
his name.

'Bob-o-link, bob-o-link,
Spink, spank, spink:'
Snug and safe is that nest
of ours
Hidden among the sum-
mer flowers.
'Che, chee, chee!'"

BALTIMORE ORIOLE.

Here are two bright birds building a nest.

They are Mr. and Mrs. Oriole.

Mr. Oriole has a bit of string.

He is making a swing of it.

See, he fastens one end to

a twig with a twist like a knot.

Now he takes up and fastens the other end of the string to a twig a few inches from the first.

It hangs like a swing and blows in the wind.

He brings another and another; he brings some more strings and fastens them all in the same way.

Here comes Mrs. Oriole with some more strings and fibres.

Why, what a little weaver! She puts her strings in so every one crosses those Mr. Oriole put in.

She has made them cross and re-cross till she makes it all a network.

She began at the bottom of the swing Mr. Oriole made.

Bravo! little weavers. There is no wind strong enough to tear your house from the tree.

When Mr. and Mrs. Oriole build in a very warm State, they do not line the nest with wool.

If they are building in a cool State, they line it thickly.

Where did they learn so much?

Now that Mr. and Mrs. Oriole have finished their nest, we will look at them while they rest and sing.

Mr. Oriole has black on

his head, back, wings and part of his tail.

All the rest of his feathers are a bright, golden yellow.

Mrs. Oriole is dressed more modestly, but very daintily in olive and pale yellow.

Mr. Oriole stopped his round, rich notes just now to catch a caterpillar.

Along the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers the Orioles love to build in the forests, and

to use the dangling moss for building their nests; or they build near planter's homes when they use strings and grass fibres.

In New England they often hang their basket nest on the edge of a twig on some grand, old elm.

There they swing and rock, and there their babies swing and rock without a care for wind or weather.

Before the babes can fly,

they are taught to creep to the outside of the nest and hang there like little woodpeckers.

When the young can fly they follow Mamma and Papa Oriole everywhere for figs, mulberries, strawberries, cherries or insects, which they love to eat.

I saw Mr. Oriole do a funny thing one day.

He clung to a twig with all his might.

Then he reached for an insect.

The insect was so far off I thought Mr. Oriole could not reach it.

Mr. Oriole stretched his neck, his back, his wings, but kept tight hold with his feet.

Snap went the insect into Mr. Oriole's bill, and back went Mr. Oriole to his place, just in time to save himself a tumble.

When summer is over, the orioles start for warmer lands.

High up above all the trees they take their flight, going one by one, not in flocks.

When sunset comes they dart down to some tree to eat and to rest until morning.

We shall look for you next May, Mr. Oriole, when the apple trees and cherry trees

are dressed in their wedding suits.

Do not disappoint us, nor the pretty blossoms.

THE PEWEE OR PHEBE BIRD.

Come down to the bridge which spans the brook.

I heard a strange cry.

"Pee-wee; pe-wee; pe-wee!"

Do you hear it?

Yes; the sound comes from that little olive colored bird with the yellow breast.

Do you not see him, there on that dry twig by the water?

Oh, yes; he has a pretty crest on his head.

I saw him catch a fly then.

But what makes you so sad, little bird?

Your note is full of sorrow.

Your little mate is near by, for I just saw her, and your nest is safe under that large beam in the bridge.

What can make you so sad, then?

Have you a secret you can not tell?

Well, good-by, little Phebe; we must be off to visit some more of our feathered friends.

PHEBE.

NIGHTINGALE.

TEACHING SINGING.

A Nightingale set up a singing school:
Set all the wild birds to learning his rule.
The Crow studied hard, determined to learn;
Sparrow got such a scolding it made his cheeks burn.

Poor Robin got laughed at
as much as the Crow;
The shy Thrush would pipe
just one soft note and
go.
The Finches lost courage
and sang not a note;
Bobolink's pretty music all
"stuck in his throat."
Sir Nightingale sobbed,
"There's no song in these
birds."
Said his wise little wife,
"Let me speak a few
words.

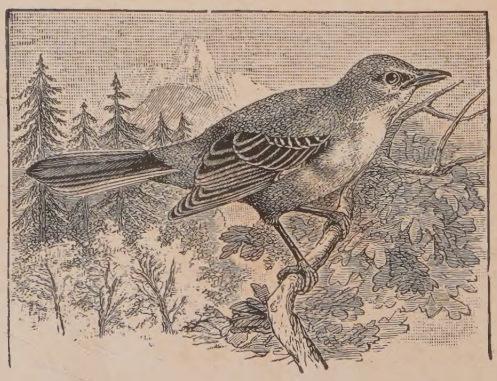
Go home to your meadows, your pastures and brooks,
And study song there, lay away all your books,
And learn of the sunbeams, the wind and the trees,
And dance while you sing among flowers and leaves.
Then sing as you feel; next week we'll come together,
And have a grand concert if mild be the weather."

Next week they came; all were dressed in their best;
Each sang the sweet song that lay in his breast.
Such music they made that the critics agreed,
No such songs ever floated o'er brierwood weed.
The sun laughed so hard at the jolly, round note,
That he got a stray cloud stuck fast in his throat.

The wind clapped applause, the sweet rain came down, and made for each singer a dazzling crown.

The school-room is closed with this note on the door:

"Pupils in vocal training will meet here no more."



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